

Monument Avenue, 3100 Block
Richmond
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1310

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
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Historic American Buildings Survey
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MONUMENT AVENUE, 3100 BLOCK

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Location: 3100 block of Monument Avenue, between Belmont Avenue and Cleveland Street, Richmond, Virginia.

History and Description:

In the 1920s, long after the city straightened Monument Avenue and extended it to Roseneath Road, the first houses were built on the 3100 block between Belmont and Cleveland streets. The statue of Matthew Fontaine Maury was unveiled after the blocks were nearly complete, in 1929. The Matthew Fontaine Maury Association, backed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, laid the cornerstone for a memorial to the commodore on June 22, 1922, at the intersection of Belmont and Monument avenues; the monument, sculpted by Richmonder F. William Sievers, was unveiled on Armistice Day, November 11, 1929.¹ The triangular configuration of the south side of the block is a direct result of the extension of Monument at the point where West Franklin veers south. Because the lots on the south side were originally platted to face perpendicular to Franklin, they now front Monument at an angle. However, unlike those lots on the 3000 block, these share a consistent width (just over 26') and developmental history. On the north side are some of the most generous lots on the avenue, and the houses include at least four designed by W. Duncan Lee (Nos. 3100, 3114, 3142, and 3170).

In 1922 owners of lots on the north side adopted covenants providing for a generous setback of 30', along with an agreement not to build apartment houses or buildings for flats. The agreement had no time limit, stating that the restrictions "shall run as covenants with the land and shall apply to the heirs and grantees of the parties hereto" and that it was made, "In consideration of the protection which the covenants herein made will provide to all of the said parties and to their said properties respectively." Signers of the agreement were Matthew McGregor and Willie H. Anderson, Mary M. Lewis, Carter N. and Hattie M. Williams, Lee and Edith L. Paschall, Mrs. A. B. McGeorge, and John W. and Annie S. Williams. According to city directories, only the Lewis and Anderson families ever lived in a house built on the 3100 block.

Although large Colonial Revival residences dominate on the north side of the block, there are two slightly smaller examples of eclectic 1920s architecture at Nos. 3102 and 3104. Built on lots just wider than 30', they are closer in scale to the cottages across the street than to the adjacent properties. The last house built on the block, No. 3102 is a brick two-story Tudor Revival house with a cross-gable slate roof and a secondary front gable over a Tudor arch leading to a recessed entry. Bands of four windows with segmental arches above designate the first and second floors. The house was built in 1930 for Elsie Greentree; she occupied it with her husband, Irving, owner of a clothing store.

¹Matthew Fontaine Maury vertical file, Valentine Museum; summer exhibition on monuments of Monument Avenue, American Historical Foundation, Richmond, Virginia. In 1921 the Richmond city council renamed that portion of the south side of the 3000 block of Monument Avenue that begins to veer off into West Franklin Street "Maury Place," in anticipation of the monument. According to the July 30, 1958, Richmond News-Leader, the name change was hardly noted (city directories ignored it); it was rescinded by a later ordinance.

Next door is a slightly larger Mediterranean Revival house at No. 3104, with a tile roof and white stucco facade. The roof is hipped in the front, with low attic windows above the cornice line. Three bays line up on the two floors, with recessed arches above the lower windows and an arched limestone surround on the door with fanlight above; limestone trim also defines the edges of the building, and there is a balustrade around the front terrace. The side facade, although it faces an open yard, has only three small arched windows, which light an interior stair.

In August 1922 John W. Williams took out a building permit for No. 3104, where he planned to build a brick two-story residence designed by the Davis Brothers with a flat mansard roof, estimated to cost \$13,500. This was just two weeks before the block-owners' agreement, and Williams specified a 30' setback in the permit, along with a 7' elevation from the street. But that building was never erected. In 1927, Rabbi Edward N. Calisch bought the lot, and erected a house for himself. This was Calish's third residence on Monument Avenue, and the first that he built for himself. In 1928 architectural supervisor Harold E. Calisch is listed as the first resident of No. 3104; the rabbi and his wife, Essie S. L. Calisch, moved in by 1929. The Calisches sold the house in 1939, after which it changed hands at least once every decade.

The other houses on the north side of the block are large, suburban examples of 1920s Colonial Revival architecture. All are wide, with two or two-and-a-half stories and hipped or side-gable roofs. Three of the four--Nos. 3114, 3142, and 3170--have side porches or sunrooms, an unusual feature east of the 3100 block. The two later houses--Nos. 3100 and 3114 were both built between 1924 and 1927--repeat design elements of the 1923 houses at Nos. 3142 and 3170, giving the block some sense of cohesion.

Similar facades on Nos. 3100 and 3170 have the bilateral symmetry characteristic of Georgian Revival houses. Seven bays on No. 3170 and five bays on No. 3100, three evenly spaced gable-roofed dormers, and central entrances emphasize the width of the two houses. A broken segmental pediment with urn marks the entry at No. 3170, while No. 3100 has double doors with a transom and sloped metal roof supported by volute brackets. Window treatment is identical on each facade, with modest segmental arches at the latter and dark shutters at the former. Built on opposite corners of the north side, the two houses act as stylistic anchors for the block. Duncan Lee designed No. 3170 for Mathew McGregor Anderson in 1922, and No. 3100 for Merrill E. Raab in 1924. The estimated cost for No. 3170 was \$30,000, with a \$3,000 garage added later; the cost for No. 3100 was estimated at \$26,000.

Duncan Lee also designed the houses at Nos. 3114 and 3142, which both emphasize horizontal movement in their facades, with gabled entry pavilions to the left and elaborate one-story solariums to the right of three-bay main blocks. Each is two stories, with a single dormer and a segmental pediment over the doorway. More elaborate classical treatment on No. 3114 includes a Palladian effect at the solarium windows, articulated brick quoins defining the pavilion and building corners, and a rusticated limestone door surround with broken pediment and cartouche above. A brick wall extends along the full 125' front of the lot for No. 3114, which includes three full and two partial lots from the original Sheppard estate plat.

Gus Schwarzschild, vice president of Schwarzschild Brothers Jewelers, acquired the land for No. 3114 in two parcels, the first 85' in 1924 from Carter N. Williams, Jr., and an additional

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40' from Henry and Clara Wallerstein in 1928 after the house was built. After Gus died, his widow Rae F. Schwarzschild sold the property to Maurice L. Strause in 1935. The Strauses sold the house to Edwin M. and Nancy Johnson Rucker in 1958; the Ruckers sold it in 1981.

On the south side of the street, the 3100 block is divided between the Lord Fairfax apartment building, which fronts 150' on Franklin and 160' on Monument, and eclectic cottages on the rest of the block. The Lord Fairfax was built in 1923, while the cottages went up as a group in 1926. The cottages are closely spaced on narrow lots, and face Monument Avenue at an angle. The Roseneath Land Company had already laid out lots as fronting on Franklin and sold them by 1907, before Monument Avenue was cut through.

The Lord Fairfax, one of the grandest apartment buildings on Monument Avenue, is built to the limit of its triangular lot on all sides, **Nos. 3101-15 Monument**. Designed by the firm Lindner and Phillips, the Lord Fairfax is a high-style, Beaux Arts-influenced building that is particularly urban in comparison to its neighbors, with entrances at the street level and a long thirteen-bay facade. Breaking up the mass of the building are three entrance bays defined by breaks in the cornice, arched stone window surrounds through the full three stories, and segmental pediments over fluted pilasters at the doors. A parapet runs around the entire building, articulated above the entrance bays with a cross-hatch stone design; further stone decoration includes a medallion and garland frieze under the cornice and lines of stone inlay throughout the facade. A smooth-stone water table raises the first floor off of ground level. The doors have scroll tops, with transoms above.

The Willis Company of Norfolk acquired the triangular lot for the Lord Fairfax in two parcels, each of which had been pulled together from several smaller lots originally sold by the Roseneath Land Company and the Lee Annex Realty Corporation. In January 1923 the company applied for a building permit to construct apartments at an estimated cost of \$150,000; they took out a \$90,000 deed of trust in August, and another \$35,000 mortgage in 1924. By 1924, only five tenants lived at the Lord Fairfax, including a nurse, a traveling salesman, and a druggist. J. N. Willis, Jr., a special agent for the Canadian Sun Life Assurance Company and president of the Willis Company, also lived there. By 1930, thirty-nine apartments were listed in the city directory, six of them vacant. Tenants included a dictaphone operator for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, an assistant repeater for a telegraph company, and the business manager for the Richmond Times Dispatch. In 1931, the Willis Company defaulted on the mortgage, and the property was sold at auction for \$30,000 cash and the assumption of a \$58,000 deed of trust. Throughout its history, companies and not individuals have owned the Lord Fairfax.

On the west end of the south side, from Nos. 3117 to 3133, nine cottages were built in 1926 for Jeanette A. Mayo at an estimated cost of \$100,000. The architect, Carl M. Lindner, briefly owned and occupied the house at No. 3129. Adhering to covenants enacted by the Lee Annex Realty Corporation, these dwellings have a 15' setback from the street and had to be at least \$2,500 in value. Even more consistent in scale and massing than the row houses on the 2200 block, these nevertheless demonstrate a variety of styles, including Tudor, Mediterranean, and Colonial Revival. They are small, each measuring just 22'-6" x 44'. Most are two stories, with cross-gabled facades, and all are elevated from the street on berms similar to those across the street. The one exception is No. 3125, which has a simple side-gabled roof and small shed

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dormers, making it the only two-and-a-half-story house in the row. As on earlier blocks, styles are repeated intermittently, so that nearly identical houses reappear in the row.

The Spanish Colonial Revival houses at Nos. 3123 and 3131 are white stucco, each with a large arcaded porch that visually extends the house toward the street. The entrances (as well as the first-floor French doors) are arched, with limestone surrounds. A low-pitched front gable extends above the porch on each, and No. 3131 has a tile roof. Two varieties of Tudor Revival cottages appear on the block. Those at Nos. 3117 and 3127 are similar in form to the Spanish Colonial Revival houses, but with wood porches and steeper front gables covered partially in dark clapboard. White stucco is the primary facade material, with irregular brick trim around the windows and arched entry doors; low brick walls laid in a herringbone pattern enclose the porches. Adding to the Tudor quality of the building is an irregular slate roof on No. 3117.

Slate roofs also grace Nos. 3121 and 3129, the other Tudor examples on the block. These have large clipped front gables with half-timbering, stucco infill (white on No. 3129, gray on No. 3121) and pendants below. The rest of the facade is brick, with a slate pent roof dividing the two floors, limestone surrounding the Tudor-arched front door, and decorative wood shutters on the paired first-floor windows. The other three cottages on the block are Colonial Revival examples, but with elements that tie them stylistically to the other cottages. The solarium and gabled pavilion on No. 3133 repeat the form of the stucco porch and gable on No. 3131, and the open cast-iron porch supports at No. 3119 are similar to the wood piers on No. 3117. Like the half-timbered Tudor examples, No. 3125 has no porch and a slate pent roof separating the floors. In the context of the whole block, even the Colonial Revival style takes on an eclectic flavor.

Sources of Information:

Richmond City Directories.

Richmond Building Permits: 1414 (3100 Monument); 20721 (3102 Monument); 10129 (3104 Monument); 14493 (3114 Monument); 9892 (3142 Monument); 9582, 10347 (3170 Monument); 10788 (3101-15 Monument); 16314 (3109-25 Monument).

Deed Books: **3104 Monument:** 167/1372, 10/324, 679/704, 650C/326, 642C/779, 632D/500, 534B/149, 524B/385, 436D/547, 418A/241, 344D/377, 325C/349, 297B/467, 291D/309, 280C/127, 272C/231, 252C/149, 238A/464, 286C/65, 280C/134, 239B/354, 239A/343; **3114 Monument:** 236/1969, 782/1032, 587B/433, 501D/231, 430B/19, 400C/27, 358B/107, 325C/349, 286D/461, 311C/269, 297B/467, 312C/5, 284/436, 286D/65, 291D/309, 293A/35, 279C/494, 280C/127, 280C/134, 272C/231, 239A/140, 239B/354, 238A/464, 252C/149, 251A/183; **3101-15 Monument:** 64/1834, 766/53, 743/131, 677B/102, 441B/25, 441B/22, 375A/426, 282D/162, 233B/157, 231CX/468, 214D/528, 203A/436, 202D/135, 200D/285, 250C/236, 243B/231, 234C/155, 212A/291, 208D/191, 208C/88, 201D/429, 201B/402, 200D/79, 199B/297, 195B/76, 177B/161, 281A/43, 281A/43, 269A/33, 201D/106, 201D/100, 194/122, 170B/400, 201D/105, 199A/29, 201B/407; **3129 Monument:** 169/1983, 133/125, 49/693, 744/1805, 416B/273, 406C/101, 397C/80, 396B/232, 350B/247, 336A/56, 336A/57, 318B/316, 231C/468, 214D/528, 203A/436, 202D/135, 200B/49, 200D/285, 200B/47, 197A/143, 165A/239.

Project Information:

This documentation of Monument Avenue was undertaken in summer 1991 by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), a division of the National Park Service, Washington, D.C., under the general direction of Robert J. Kapsch, chief. The project was sponsored by the Monument Avenue Centennial Committee, Millie Jones and Ceci Amrhein, co-chairpersons, and Sylvia Summers, director of development. Funding was provided by the Historic Monument Avenue and Fan District Foundation, the City of Richmond, the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, the Historic Richmond Foundation, the F. M. Kirby Foundation, Inc., and the Robert G. Cabell III and Maude Morgan Cabell Foundation.

HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland directed the project and edited this historical report. Kathy Edwards (University of California at Berkeley) was the field supervisor; Esme Howard (Yale University) and Toni Prawl (University of Missouri) were the team historians. Jonathan C. Spodek, AIA, produced architectural drawings and Jack Boucher took the photographs. The team's work resulted in the publication Monument Avenue, of which the report on this one block forms only a small portion. Researchers are referred to that volume for more information.

ADDENDUM TO:
3100 BLOCK MONUMENT AVENUE
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